

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1353

UNCLAS MANILA 15771

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: MARR, US, RP

SUBJ: MARCOS PRESS CONFERENCE: COMMENTS ON BASES NEGOTIATIONS

1. DURING OCT 7 PRESS CONFERENCE, PRESIDENT MARCOS WAS ASKED QUESTION ON STATUS OF BASES NEGOTIATIONS. MARCOS DISCLOSED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER AND GENERAL ROMULO MET WEDNESDAY (OCT 6) BUT SAID, "THERE IS NOTHING CLEAR AS TO WHAT HAS BEEN AGREED UPON." HE CONTINUED, "WE PROBABLY CAN REPORT A CONTINUATION OF THE PANEL NEGOTIATIONS HERE IN MANILA."

2. MARCOS THEN DISCUSSED THE SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE. HE SAID, "FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, IT MEANS RULES AND REGULATIONS SHOULD BE ISSUED BY THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY COMMANDER AS TO HOW THESE FACILITIES SHOULD BE USED WITHOUT PERHAPS MOVING INTO THE TERRITORY OF ACTUAL OPERATIONS OF THE UNITS BASED IN THESE FACILITIES...THIS LAST ONE IS STILL SOMETHING THAT HAS TO BE NEGOTIATED...WE DON'T KNOW WHERE ONE ENDS AND THE OTHER BEGINS." HE SAID THE PHILIPPINES UNDERSTANDING OF SOVEREIGNTY IS THAT: "THOSE BASES WILL NO LONGER BE CALLED U.S. BUT PHILIPPINE BASES; THERE MUST BE A PHILIPPINE COMMANDER AND NOT AN AMERICAN ARMED FORCES COMMANDER; THERE MUST BE ONLY THE FLAG OF THE PHILIPPINES BECAUSE THE BASES ARE PHILIPPINE TERRITORY." "FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW," HE NOTED, "SOVEREIGNTY IS NOT NEGOTIABLE, BUT WE ARE READY TO ALLOW THE UNITED STATES TO MAINTAIN ITS PRESENCE IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC."

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3. MARCOS WAS ALSO ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY LINK BETWEEN THE IMPOSITION OF A HIGHER U.S. TARIFF ON PHILIPPINE SUGAR AND THE BASE TALKS. MARCOS REPLIED THAT THE HIGHER TARIFF AROSE BECAUSE OF THE INTERNAL U.S. POLITICAL NEED TO PEASE U.S. SUGAR PRODUCERS. HE ADDED, "WE ARE STUDYING THE SITUATION, IN AS MUCH AS FRANKLY I DON'T THINK IT AFFECTS US TOO MUCH BECAUSE OF OUR CONTRACTS WITH THE REFINERS IN THE UNITED STATES."

4. PRESS COVERAGE OF THIS ASPECT OF MARCOS' LENGTHY NEWS CONFERENCE WAS RESTRAINED IN THE OCT 8 MANILA MORNING DAILIES, WHICH FOCUSED THEIR HEADLINES ON OTHER ASPECTS OF HIS REMARKS, I.E., THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN EXPECTED 8.8 BILLION PESOS BUDGET SURPLUS NEXT YEAR, AND PLANS FOR A GOP MISSION TO THE MIDDLE EAST. THE EVENING PAPERS GAVE MORE ATTENTION TO MARCOS' COMMENTS ON BASES TALKS. BOTH THE EVENING POST AND THE EVENING EXPRESS RAN HEADLINES SAYING THAT THE GOP SEEKS "FULL CONTROL" OVER U.S. BASES. STULL

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